A Philosophy of Education
Part I

by:

Dr. Donna D. Lenaghan

PREFACE:

A philosophy of education is a compass that guides professional practice, scholarly research and ways of thinking, knowing and doing. Practically and naturally, I'm a doer who thinks (constantly reflecting and learning) not an inspirator with abstractions. Yet, all practitioners need to articulate solid values and principles to guide practice and compare self to known models. If an historical label is helpful, I am a cognitive constructivist who has strong roots in essentialism and progressivism. Questions of epistemology, ethics, and logic are dominant in my reflecting and thinking. I believe the purpose of education is to develop educated citizens who are productive workers, active participants in democracy and engaged in a life with service to others. It is this strong philosophy of education, as eclectic as it is, that allows my kaleidoscopic practice to meet the needs of many individual and corporate learners.

MULTIGOGY® as first conceived and as evolving:

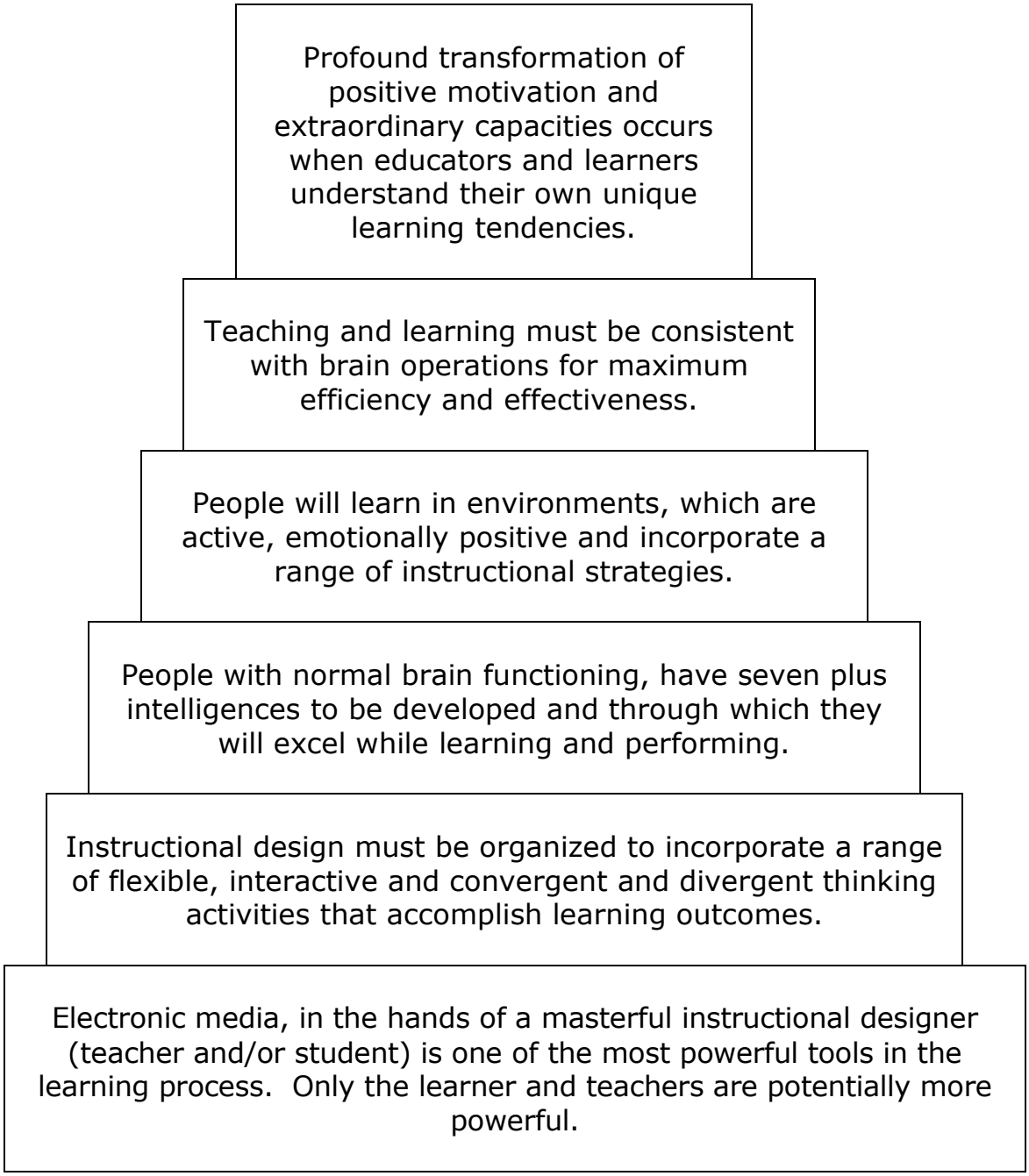
Multigogy® is a philosophy of education with an instructional design framework that is learner centered and brain based. The acronym M.U.L.T.I. (Many Unique Learning Tendencies Impact) is its prefix (precursor for

understanding) to which the Greek root "gogy" (which means teaching) is added. First, there was pedagogy (the art or profession of teaching children), then there was andragogy (the art or profession of teaching adults), and now there is Multigogy. Multigogy builds a bridge between pedagogy and andragogy (from dependent to independent learners) by addressing learning through tapping into the learner's emotional brain, cerebral cortex, multiple intelligences, physiology, and multimodal learning tendencies.

Multigogy proposes that the learner's range from dependent to independent is not solely chronologically age-based but influenced by emotional, situational and previous learning base variables. The issues of independent learners (self-directedness) and motivation by triggering the emotions, multiple intelligences and memory processes of the brain are addressed in Multigogy. The six foundational characteristics in Multigogy are listed in Table 1.

Multigogy positively engages the learner's affective and preferential sensory modalities for learning--thus motivates the person to learn. With Multigogy, students feel comfortable about learning or simply stated it allows unique individuals to teach, learn, and "play with a full deck". Imagine classrooms across the globe in which students are learning F.A.S.T.; in a (FAST) Friendly Active, Solution-oriented and Technologically supported learning environment. In these FAST environments teachers serve as an

Table 1: MULTIGOGY FOUNDATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS



inspiration, designer of learning experiences, content master, resource guide, demonstrator, and coach.

Multigogy is rooted in solid secondary research of the educational psychological theories of Behaviorism, Cognitivism and Social learning with positively affirming case study findings. It has a lesson plan guide, instructional design format, and multiple intelligence lesson planning and assessment forms. The contrast of a traditional instructional design and a multigogical design is illustrated in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

CURRIRULUM	Teacher	Students
Textbook Lecture Notes Knowledge and Skills Discrete Objectives State & District Objectives Standardized Assessments	Active Lecturer Content Expert Ask and Answer Questions Evaluator	Passive Listen Note taker Recall knowledge

Multigogy is transforming traditional approaches of teaching to incorporate technology. Instead of the traditional approach of lecturing, learning experiences are designed so students practice skills in class and are able to perform a specified number of tasks (including higher order thinking and synthesis for application) when they leave. Sometimes, just being able to "experience it or to do it", not explain it (abstract theoretical concepts), is a realistic initial learning outcome and may be developed later. The learner-centered and problem-based curriculum design works with a variety of content

TABLE 3: MULTIGOGY DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

and learning formats. For example, slow, advanced or homebound students can learn (synchronously or asynchronously) skills and content in distance learning formats, peer tutoring, on-the-job training, and self-studies using job-aids, workbooks, videos, podcasts, e-mail, Internet and curricula portals, et al. Often, not always, allowing learners to choose the format for learning and demonstrating that learning is an effective strategy to address the motivational factors in learning since learners "have a stake" in when and how to learn.

The Internet and Web 2.0 opportunities have increased interactive communications, feedback options, multimedia contextual learning and avenues for authenticity. For example, teachers use Web resources and electronic databases to survey a range of topics and develop electronic portfolios on these projects. Other examples include using discipline-based portals for resources on science, math, and language and visual arts projects and activities, et.al. Inherent in the Internet's DNA is a "continuum of knowledge authority" range that requires critical reflection and non-linear thinking. Learning opportunities and instructional design components must address this.

Teaching for learning strategies are designed so students acquire a mastery of basic concepts and professional skills and attitudes needed or effective, efficient and ethical application. Lessons are designed to cover mandated objectives and use a variety of instructional techniques to actively

engage students in learning through a variety of formats and activities and create new knowledge as well as replicating, reconfiguring and synthesizing existing knowledge. Learning activities should include technology as a creative thinking, research and production tools since these tools are used in higher education, workplace and "real-world". Plus, they are initially motivating and transforming.

Multigogy prescribes teaching for learning environments conducive for most learners to shine and be stars! A few of these learning environment components are: a) positive emotional chargers and rechargers ; b) cooperative learning opportunities; c) independent and reflective learning opportunities; d) breaking the constructs, concepts and components into simple, small and sequential units and rebuilding them into a holistic unit or vice versa; e) engaging students in problem solving activities, case studies, scenarios and experiential learning activities; and f) effectively using technology as a tool for learning.

Multigogy is an educational philosophy with a teaching for learning design that produces all-star learners and 21st Century leaders, citizens and workers. Like the kaleidoscope, different combinations of components create novel arrangements. The focus is teaching for learning and designing lessons so students, outcomes, content, and instructional methodologies slide into place to make a memorable and valuable learning experience. Multigogy provides the veteran educator the reassurance of "I've been doing it right all

along and didn't know it" and ways to evaluate why some lessons are outstanding and some so-so. It provides a rationale and framework to plan and evaluate technology infused learning. For the novice, it provides a firm launching pad to plan instruction and build upon personal strengths. Multigogy provides opportunities for all students to Shine and Be All-Star Learners!

2011 Reflection about Multigogy:

Each time I evaluate Multigogy, my philosophy of education, I am amazed how it has soared and strengthened with the test of time. Someone defined a value as something that does not change over the years. Indeed the core values of my educational philosophy and practices have remained constant and withstood "the test of time" with thousands of learners in hundreds of settings.

The proliferation of technology does not change core values of learning but it does make information and communications multimodal (all five learning styles), instant, expertise diffused, non-linear and sometimes frustrating, confusing, and distracting. The use of technology has the potential to help students of all ages achieve critical and creative thinking and application and synthesis of knowledge in ways impossible without technology.

21st Century Learning, Cognitive Constructivism, Five Minds of the Future, Epistemology of Knowledge, Information and Communication

Technologies (ICT^3) and Service Learning conceptual frames, concepts and/or competencies have become more prominent and intertwined within my theory and evident within my practice. The magic of learning with appropriate sequencing and scaffolding of concepts and applying knowledge individually and/or collaboratively within safe and friendly environments remains the core of my philosophy of education.

For sources and references that help inspire, formulate and refine my educational theory and practice, please review Multigogy Part II (the second document) entitled: *"Theoretical Underpinnings of Multigogy® and its SCORE BASICS for TLC^6 and CREDS"* that reveals Multigogy's Instructional Design Framework.